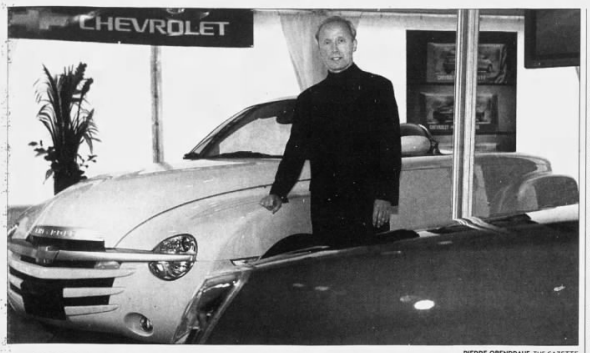
Newspapers by ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/425781407/

Downloaded on Feb 7, 2026



PIERRE OBENDRAUF THE GAZETTE
Steve O'Reilly, Quebec Zone Manager for GM Canada, thinks company's new line of smaller cars will help boost sales in this province.

General Motors targets Quebec

STAKES BET ON SMALL, AFFORDABLE CARS

Launches all-out advertising campaign in effort to grab larger share of market

MARY LAMEY
THE GAZETTE

General Motors rolled into town yesterday hoping to sell Quebecers on its new line of smaller, affordable cars.

GM controls 28 per cent of the Canadian car market, but only 20.9 per cent of the market in Quebec. It wants to close that gap and has launched an all-out marketing campaign to get its message across.

"Smaller cars make up about 30 per cent of the market in the rest of Canada, but they account for 80 per cent of the sales in Quebec," said Steve O'Reilly, GM's Quebec sales director. "We think we have a good chance to boost our sales here. We've got price, design and styling."

The company sold about 58,000 cars in Quebec and is aiming to boost that number by 12,000 vehicles in 2004. That would increase its market penetration of 25 per cent, O'Reilly said.

The company is staking its bet on four vehicles: the Aveo, a sporty hatchback geared to the entry-level buyer, the Epica, a mid-sized sedan currently only available in Canada, the Optra, a sporty sedan and the redesigned Chevy Malibu.

GM also unveiled its Colorado pickup truck and the SSR, which combines the functionality of a pickup truck with the style of an open-air roadster. The pickup bed has a retractable hardtop. The vehicles are in showrooms now.

Quebecers have a love affair with Japanese cars, a choice motivated by price, styling and maybe just a touch of anti-American sentiment, automotive consultant Dennis DesRosiers said.

"Quebec has always been a difficult market for GM," DesRosiers said. "They haven't had the right product mix. This new line is their attempt to address that. The Aveo, in particular, should do well."

Suggested manufacturer's retail prices start at $13,000 for the Aveo and range up to $69,000 for the SSR, O'Reilly said. Dealers may offer incentives and financing.

GM staged its rollout of the line in the rest of Canada, but, with the input of **Cossette Communications**, decided to launch all six at once. The strategy is to create buzz and name-brand recognition, said Suzanne Sauvage, president of Cossette Montreal.

Between now and Dec. 4, consumers will be hard-pressed to miss the Chevy message. The company will be bombarding radio in Montreal and Quebec City with two to three messages per hour, has bought 700 billboards, newspaper ads in all the major dailies, TV spots on seven networks and an Internet campaign.

mlamey@
thegazette.canwest.com

MONTREAL BRIEFS

Higher revenues hand Van Houtte $4-million profit

The **Van Houtte** coffee-services company reported sharply higher profits for its latest quarter as the company benefited from higher revenues, western expansion and didn't take any writeoffs as it did the previous year. The Montreal company said yesterday it earned $4 million, or 19 cents a share, for the 12 weeks ended Oct. 11. That compared with profits of $903,000, or 4 cents a share, for the year-earlier period.

United licenses Ad Opt software

Ad Opt Technologies Inc. of Montreal said it has licensed its roster-and-scheduling software to **United Airlines.** The value of the agreement wasn't provided. Ad Opt, which provides workforce planning, scheduling and management products, said its altitude-preferential bidding system will generate flight schedules for 7,000 United pilots to help the airline cut costs and improve flexibility.

Horizon Air order gets downgraded

Horizon Air of Seattle has downgraded its order of two Bombardier regional jets to two turboprops. Bombardier said Horizon Air has ordered two additional 70-seat Bombardier Q400 turboprop airliners, which will increase its fleet to 17, of which 15 have been delivered.

EARTH dips

Shares in **EARTH (Canada) Corp.,** whose technology separates oil and water in energy projects, fell sharply after the company reported its first-quarter loss deepened as revenue fell 15 per cent. EARTH, short for Environmental Applied Research Technology House, lost $460,419, or one cent per share, for the three months ended Sept. 30, compared with a loss of $229,481, or one cent a share, for the corresponding period in 2002.

Selling Montreal

Montréal International is leaving on a four-day mission Nov. 17 to California to promote the Montreal region's expertise in biotech, software and gaming businesses. The delegation is headed by Georges Bossé, member of Montreal's executive committee responsible for economic development.

Campbell shines

Campbell Resources Inc. turned a profit in its third quarter, helped by higher gold prices and increased production. Campbell reported earnings of $600,000 for the three months ended Sept. 30, compared with a loss of $2.9 million a year ago.

Claude rebounds

Claude Resources Inc. said high gold prices helped to offset the impact of a weaker U.S. dollar as the firm posted a third-quarter profit of $1 million. Earnings for the quarter ended Sept. 30 amounted with 2 cents a share and compared with a loss of $200,000, or zero cents per share ,a year earlier, the Montreal-based company reported.

CGI renews deal

CGI Group Inc. announced yesterday the renewal of a multimillion-dollar, three-year information-technology outsourcing contract with **Ipsco Inc.** of Regina. CGI will continue to operate the steel producer's mainframe systems from CGI's data centre in Regina. CGI also provides a call centre and personnel to support Ipsco's 2,200 employees at 13 locations.

THE GAZETTE, BLOOMBERG NEWS, CANADIAN PRESS

Ex-Jitec CEO launches $117-million lawsuit against QSC

Alleges watchdog was abusive and reckless in investigating his trades in company stock

NICOLAS VAN PRAET
THE GAZETTE

A controversial high-tech entrepreneur has launched the biggest lawsuit ever against the Quebec Securities Commission.

Benoit Laliberté, the 31-year-old former chief executive of **Jitec Inc.,** is seeking $117 million in a suit that alleges the watchdog was abusive and reckless when it investigated his trades in company stock three years ago.

The court action dwarfs all other suits brought against the securities commission. The next largest suit was $1 million, a QSC official said.

Laliberté was trading stock in now-bankrupt Jitec while he was top boss of the company through transactions he allegedly sometimes failed to report. The securities commission investigated his trading activities and plans on reporting its findings by Christmas.

Court documents filed by Laliberté's lawyers this week allege the QSC was being manipulated by well-known Westmount businessman Herbert Black. They allege Black wanted to taint Jitec because he was looking to pocket millions of dollars by short-selling the company's stock.

Short-selling is a risky tactic whereby an investor borrows a stock, sells it, buys it back later at a lower price, and pockets the difference. The bet is the stock price will go down.

"The QSC has acted beyond its mandate for an improper purpose in order to assist Black to achieve an illegal and improper goal which consisted of attempting to destroy the value of the publicly traded shares of Jitec such that Black was able to continue short selling of the stock in Jitec," the documents allege.

"Black was using the policing powers of this investigative body in order to 'get an enemy,' " the filings allege.

Reached yesterday, Black said he brought Jitec's activities to the QSC's attention not to bring down the stock and profit from it, but because he was considering investing and questioned the company's legitimacy. Jitec sold stripped-down computers to small and medium-size businesses.

"I think it's a frivolous lawsuit," Black said.

The QSC declined to comment on the suit, saying it is still reviewing it.

"We're looking at it now. We're going to evaluate our options," said commission spokesperson Barbara Timmins.

None of Laliberté's allegations have been proven in court.

Laliberté alleges negative newspaper coverage about the commission's investigation into his stock trading, particularly reports by The Gazette, fuelled the downward spiral of his once high-flying Jitec shares and forced his resignation from the company. The QSC told Laliberté to cease trading Nov. 10, 2000.

Laliberté's suit alleges Black fed The Gazette information "in order to create a nervous reaction of investors in Jitec." It also claims Black "unduly influenced" two QSC officials.

The suit mentions the QSC fired Paul Trudeau, the lead investigator into Jitec, after he confessed to taking a $1,000 gift from Black in December 2000.

Black said yesterday he never gave money to Trudeau.

"I never gave him a gift. I never gave him any money. I bought drinks. It was near Christmas. We had a few drinks. I don't even remember how many, but they definitely weren't worth $1,000."

Trudeau is still contesting his dismissal.

Laliberté was charged in July, along with eight others, for participating in what police described as a loan-sharking ring that was lending money to businesspeople. He has proclaimed his innocence in court.

nvanpraet@
thegazette.canwest.com

QUEEN'S MBA FOR SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
Queen's SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Access the power of Canada's most respected MBA.

Your background is science, engineering or technology.
Your future is business leadership.

BusinessWeek names *Queen's MBA for Science & Technology* #1 in Canada, and #2 in the world, in its highly regarded ranking of non-U.S. business schools. And it can open the door to opportunities you've dreamed about.

An innovative 12-month, full-time program starting each May in Kingston, *Queen's MBA for Science & Technology* is designed to prepare people with degrees in science, engineering or technology for successful careers as business leaders.

You will learn more, of greater value, in less time... all within the highly collaborative environment of our unique team-based learning model.

Take the time to attend an information session. And find out why Queen's is the undisputed leader in educating Canadian business leaders.

Contact us at www.mbast.com or 1.888.621.0060

ATTEND AN INFORMATION SESSION

MONTREAL

Tuesday, November 18
12:15-1:15pm (lunch)
Holiday Inn-Pointe Claire
6700 Trans-Canada Highway

Tuesday, November 18
6:00-7:00 pm
Fairmont Queen Elizabeth
900 René-Lévesque Boulevard West

Copyright © 2026 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.